Prairie Dogs
Lesson 5
Field

Prairie Dog Site Selection

Learner Outcomes
The learner will
- Inventory the capture site in terms of soil type and plants.
- Summarize data from the capture site to establish criteria for a release site.
- Select a potential reintroduction site based on criteria.
- Interact with park service professionals to perform fieldwork experience.

Background
This activity is for those students selected to do fieldwork in GMNP. It will require several days of fieldwork to complete this activity. Park Service employees and adult sponsors (teachers, etc.) will supervise students. Overnight stays involving low impact camping may be required. This component is performance based.

Materials
- Supplements numbers 3.37
- NRCS soil map and topographical map
- Soil sample containers
- Plant Identification Field Guide
- Transportation, food, water, field clothes, limited (only essential) camping gear
- Notebook and field journal
- Video and still camera

Assessments
- Prairie Dog Selection Student Evaluation (check list of activities performed)
- Notebook and field journal

Activity #1
Inventory of Capture Site
2 days

Procedure
The teacher will
- Instruct students to locate capture site on NRCS map and identify soil type.
- Have students identify and collect plant information on the Prairie Dog Site Selection Plant and Soil Data Sheet.
- Instruct students to analyze and summarize data to establish criteria for prairie dog release site.
- Have students locate potential release sites using NRCS and topographical maps.

Activity #2
Release Site Selection
3 days

Procedure

The teacher will

- Transport students to potential relocation sites for evaluation.
- Facilitate the identification and collection of plant information on the Prairie Dog Site Selection Plant and Soil Data Sheets.
- Instruct the students to analyze and summarize data to compare capture site criteria to potential relocation sites.
- Have students work with Park Service personnel to select a reintroduction site based on similarity to capture site criteria.